United Nations S/PV.5976

Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5976th meeting

Friday, 19 September 2008, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Kafando	(Burkina Faso)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Grauls
	China	Mr. Du Xiacong
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregions

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2008/601)

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08-51167 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2008/601)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Central African Republic and Chad, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Central African Republic, His Excellency Mr. Dieudonné Kombo Yaya.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Kombo Yaya (Central African Republic) and Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) took seats at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Victor da Silva Angelo, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, contained in document S/2008/601.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Victor da Silva Angelo, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Angelo (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) of 12 September 2008.

The report covers the principal developments in politics, the security situation and humanitarian concerns since the last report of the Secretary-General of 8 July 2008 (S/2008/444). It also shares the findings of the joint United Nations-European Union midterm review of the implementation of resolution 1778 (2007) and recommendations for arrangements following the end of the mandate of the European Union-led military force in Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR).

Before providing an overview of the key elements of the concept of operations of a possible United Nations presence following the end of the EUFOR mandate, I should like to refer to the situation in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic, and to the activities of MINURCAT during the most recent reporting period.

The situation in Chad remains fragile. There has been some progress on the political front, including the signing by eight additional political parties of the 13 August 2007 agreement on electoral and institutional reforms. The implementation of the agreement has been somewhat limited, however, and we shall have to encourage the various parties to accelerate it.

There has been no significant progress with respect to the implementation of the Sirte agreement of 25 October 2007 between the Government of Chad and the main armed opposition groups. Furthermore, instability and insecurity could increase after the imminent end of the rainy season, when the roads will become passable and rebel activities will resume.

Relations between Chad and the Sudan remain tense, despite the regular meetings of the contact group established under the Dakar Accord of 13 March 2008. The group met on 12 September and achieved positive results. Indeed, Chad and the Sudan agreed on that

occasion to exchange ambassadors and to reopen their embassies before the next meeting of the contact group. The decision to hold that meeting in N'djamena was an additional confidence-building measure. An intensive political dialogue must now be held at the highest level — either national or regional — to maintain the momentum created in Asmara. The international community must be prepared to support the process with renewed vigour, as it remains fragile.

Eastern Chad currently hosts over 290,000 refugees and more than 180,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), who continue to rely on humanitarian aid for their survival. The spontaneous and voluntary return of IDPs has been halted by a lack of the basic social services and national capacities necessary to socio-economic recovery, strengthened local administration and the restoration of the rule of law. Above all, however, the main obstacle to return is the problem of security.

MINURCAT has begun providing security, logistical support and security information to the humanitarian community, but the protection of civilians remains of major concern. Villages are attacked regularly, impunity remains a critical issue and criminal acts are rarely investigated or are often dismissed, given the weakness of the judicial institutions. Vulnerable groups, in particular women and children, are often the most severely affected. Refugee camps in eastern Chad are allegedly being used by rebels as places of rest and recruitment. Refugee camps, sites for displaced persons and villages are targeted for forced recruitment, especially of children.

Alongside the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Children's Fund, MINURCAT is currently conducting an inventory of cases of child recruitment in eastern Chad, in close cooperation with the Chadian ministries concerned. The first part of that exercise has begun, and the exercise itself should be concluded in early October.

In the Central African Republic, it must be said that the security situation in the Vakaga region in the north-eastern part of the country remains volatile. The presence of MINURCAT and EUFOR have encouraged the Government of the Central African Republic to strengthen its administrative presence in the area, but the situation remains fragile and must be supported. However, the access of humanitarian workers to the Sam Ouandja refugee camp remains very problematic and the convoys of non-governmental organizations are often attacked and threatened.

I should like to say a few words concerning the deployment of MINURCAT. As of 18 September, MINURCAT had 768 of the 1,500 authorized staff members, including 210 United Nations police officers and 45 military liaison officers. Fifty United Nations police officers are currently deployed on the ground outside N'djamena. We have 37 in Abéché, five in Bangui, seven in Farchana and in Goz Beida, and two in Iriba. The civilian portion of the Mission is currently deployed in all sectors: N'Djamena, Abéché, Farchana, Goz Beida, Iriba, Birao and Bangui. We continue to deploy United Nations police and other personnel as premises are built and as logistical infrastructure is put in place.

Current mission support agreements include a construction contract signed with Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE), a technical agreement with the European Union-led military force in Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR) for support for United Nations personnel deployed in EUFOR camps, and contracts for fuel and food supplies signed locally.

Police stations, offices, accommodation and other vertical structures are being built despite difficult rainy-season conditions. Although security could deteriorate with the arrival of the dry season, the dry season would speed the building of police stations in remote sites such as Iriba and Bahai and could make it possible to complete the work at Abéché, Farchana and Goz Beida. Once that is done, nearly full deployment will be possible on the ground. Even though MINURCAT's deployment will not be complete until December, the impact of our presence is already visible in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic. I want to highlight our excellent cooperation and relations with the Governments of Chad and the Central African Republic and with United Nations agencies and our other partners in our area of operations.

Concerning the deployment of the Integrated Security Detachment — the Détachement intégré de sécurité (DIS) — the Mission continues to work closely with the Chadian authorities to accelerate the training and deployment of DIS personnel. Three hundred eighteen DIS officers have been trained by

MINURCAT, and the next group of DIS officers has been selected, and their training will begin on 22 September.

United Nations police and newly trained DIS officers have recently carried out a series of reconnaissance missions on the sites of their future deployment. On 15 September, 28 DIS officers were on the ground at Abéché. On 16 September 44 additional DIS officers were added; they are carrying out pre-deployment missions elsewhere in eastern Chad. Thus, there are now 72 DIS officers on the ground in eastern Chad, under the supervision of United Nations police and officers from MINURCAT. Although the memorandum of understanding with the Government concerning the DIS was signed on 14 August, the presidential decree officially establishing the Detachment has yet to be signed. In the absence of such a document, which would recognize the legal status of the DIS under domestic law, the Detachment cannot be fully deployed, which has delayed its presence on the ground. But, when the presidential decree is signed, which could be in the coming days, it is planned that DIS officers already trained will be deployed in eastern Chad as anticipated.

Turning to the rule of law, the rule of law programme of MINURCAT is cooperating with the local authorities to strengthen judicial institutions, harmonize traditional justice with the modern judiciary system and facilitate access to justice by all, by supporting the development of mobile courts and effective legal clinics.

Turning to civil affairs, civil affairs officers are on the ground and are working closely with United Nations agencies, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and with local authorities. Their present objective is basically to facilitate inter-community dialogue. Also through civil affairs officers we are carrying out a number of quick-impact projects aimed at strengthening local governance institutions. These projects fall within the realm of governance, justice and prisons, and they do not compete with the projects of humanitarian actors: rather, they complement them.

In the realm of human rights, MINURCAT human rights officers have followed and investigated cases of human rights violations, including persistent cases of sexual violence and gender-based violence against refugees and displaced persons, and the continued recruitment of child soldiers by parties to the conflict in eastern Chad and in the Sudan. Our humanitarian liaison officers, we believe, are carrying out work that is crucial in terms of paying heed to the needs of humanitarian actors and responding to their security and security information requirements.

In the framework of resolution 1325 (2000), MINURCAT has strengthened its coordination mechanisms with relevant ministries in Chad to increase the number of women involved in security matters, especially with regard to the protection of women and children in refugee camps and internally displaced person sites. For example, new training will begin on Monday for 50 women police officers and gendarmes; they will also serve as DIS officers.

Our relations and our cooperation with EUFOR has been excellent. Should the Council approve the recommendations set out in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/601), MINURCAT and EUFOR will take the necessary measures to prevent a security vacuum during the transition from EUFOR to a possible United Nations force. For such a transition to be as smooth as possible, it is crucial that at least minimal air transport, medical, engineering and logistics capacities be available on the ground before any transfer of responsibility. Placing under United Nations command some contingents already deployed in the theatre of operations and transfer to the United Nations of all sites and infrastructure set up by EUFOR would significantly expedite the process. It will also be necessary to ensure the availability of additional troops from other contributing countries, with a minimum of operational capacity, so that the deployment can take place by March 2009. It will also be crucial for the success of the mission that the mission maintain its impartiality with respect to internal and external conflicts and that it enjoy total freedom of movement, including on the principal supply routes in Chad. I should add that this has been the case to date. The Government of Chad has fully met its commitments with respect to our freedom of movement on its national territory.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report, the expansion of MINURCAT to include a military component would be effective only if in addition to its present mandate the Mission were mandated to support Chadian stakeholders in addressing underlying causes of insecurity relevant to the safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons. In that connection, the United Nations remains prepared to

help the Government to strengthen its mechanisms to ensure a stable and peaceful environment.

If the Security Council should decide to authorize the deployment of a United Nations force to replace EUFOR in the Central African Republic, as requested by the Governments of the Central African Republic and Chad and as requested by humanitarian actors in the Central African Republic, the needs and the role of the force would need to be carefully assessed.

The Security Council resolution continues to be crucially important for the stability of Chad and the Central African Republic. The security threat — in particular, from heavily armed criminal groups — remains a major problem in the area of operations. With its deterrent role, EUFOR has had a positive impact, and with the deployment of the DIS and the United Nations police, we can hope that security will be further enhanced. A concerted effort from DIS, the local Chadian authorities, United Nations police, and from security, civilian affairs, human rights and other components, as well as from EUFOR will be decisive in conditions conducive to return, in creating a safer life for refugees, displaced persons and the local population, and in resolving local tensions.

However, a significant return of refugees and displaced persons is not very likely in the short term. Only an improvement in the security conditions and more effective and participatory local administration can ensure a safe return for those who have long been affected by conflict.

I would also like very quickly to display a few photographs. The first is my way of thanking the Security Council for having come to visit us in the month of June. That visit was very useful.

The next photograph shows the presidency of the meeting of the Dakar contact group in Asmara, which includes the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Eritrea and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Libya. This photograph highlights the importance of supporting the Dakar process.

The next photograph is the same as the previous one, except that we can see the delegation of Chad face to face with the delegation of the Sudan on the other side. I have to say that the two Ministers spent a lot of time talking to each other in the corridors.

In the next photograph, we see one of our frequent meetings with all the local authorities. Specifically, this photograph shows the meeting between the Special Representative and all the sub-prefects of the Ouaddai region to discuss security matters and how to strengthen the capacities of the sub-prefects and the local administrative authorities.

Next we see, unfortunately, that the displaced persons camps are not set up as well as the refugee camps. I believe that that is one of the questions that we will have to attend to in the future. The Mission and the mandate will have to pay more attention to the question of displaced persons and ensure a balance between the attention given to refugees and that given to displaced persons.

We are going to see one or two more photographs of the displaced persons camps. In this photograph, we can see the conditions in which the displaced persons live in the huts visible in the foreground of the image. The next photograph is also of huts inhabited by displaced persons. I have no photographs of the refugees, but we can easily see that conditions in the refugee camps are certainly better.

The next photograph shows one of the DIS training officers. I have to say that the selection of the DIS trainees, whether they come from the gendarmerie or from the police, was very rigorous. The Government greatly invested in the selection of candidates, and we have been truly impressed by the quality of the people that we are training.

We also trained national trainers. It is not only United Nations trainers who are now doing the training, but also officers from the police and from the national gendarmerie who are doing the training and who were trained by us.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Victor da Silva Angelo for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Central African Republic, Mr. Dieudonné Kombo Yaya.

Mr. Kombo Yaya (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of the Central African Republic which I am leading is pleased to see the Security Council, under the presidency of Burkina Faso, consider the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) (S/2008/601). My delegation would like to thank you, Sir, and Council members for having been kind enough to give us this

opportunity to take the floor on a subject of such concern for our country, namely, the presence of the European Union-led military force in Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR) in the north-eastern part of our country.

Mr. Victor da Silva Angelo, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of MINURCAT, has just given us an excellent briefing replete with facts that should guide the Council in its deliberations. The vision of a stable and secure area does credit to the Mission. MINURCAT has potential that, if used well in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic, could lead to peace and stability there.

My delegation gladly accepts the report of the Secretary-General before us today and endorses the recommendations that figure in it. Among those, the analysis of data, the relationships among protagonists, the difficult geographical conditions for workers on the ground, the doctrine founded on the presence of outside forces, the transitional period between the end of the EUFOR mandate and the takeover by a strengthened MINURCAT are issues that characterize and require serious consideration of what is happening on the ground. The report indicates, among other things, that, with respect to the Central African Republic, the Security Council should take a stand on the recommendations to be made by the Secretariat on the consequences of a post-EUFOR presence. In that respect, I would like to make a few comments.

As the Council knows, the Central African Republic is emerging from a recurring conflict that has lasted for more than a decade. It is coming back slowly but surely thanks to the international community. As a result, we are now in a post-conflict period. Since last 12 June, the Central African Republic was added to the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, which was extremely encouraging for us. The number of hotbeds of tension has considerably decreased and significant progress in dialogue and in reconciliation has been made. Public finances have been straightened out security sector reform is in the process of being developed, and a post-conflict programme has been initiated. The State has set its main priorities with regard to security sector reform, good governance, the rule of law, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, and projected development plans.

Our achievements, such as the calm in north-eastern Central African Republic, thanks to the presence of EUFOR, must be preserved and consolidated. Moreover, a country is rebuilt in stages, especially when its administrative structures have been in decline for so long.

Given the fragility of our country in terms of security and humanitarian, economic and social affairs, and the fact that the security sector is only in the early stages of reform, I would reiterate, on behalf of my Government, our hope for an ongoing presence of a military contingent under the banner of the United Nations in the north-eastern part of the country, as President Bozizé said when the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations visited the region on 1 and 2 September. Such a presence is also desired by humanitarian agencies. Accordingly, the Under-Secretary-General also wants humanitarian actors to be protected, with the result that a military contingent's presence remains necessary.

I would ask the Security Council therefore to support recommendations on maintaining a military presence in north-eastern Central African Republic. The return to calm, which we sought with all our heart, should not lessen our vigilance with respect to an unwanted spillover of conflict from elsewhere. We must also maintain a stable and safe environment for all United Nations personnel working in the region. To that end, a military presence is vital.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic for all its tireless efforts to support the Government in the reconciliation and recovery process in my country.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Central African Republic, Mr. Kombo Yaya, for his kind words to the presidency of the Council. Once again, we welcome him to New York.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Chad.

Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to thank the Council for giving us the opportunity to express the position of our country with regard to the report under consideration and in particular to the question of extending the mandate of

the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the European Union-led military force (EUFOR), and its replacement with an extended MINURCAT operation with a military component.

We have asked to take the floor to provide some clarification, because it seemed to us that to some extent our viewpoint was not sufficiently reflected in the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/601). Hearing media comments here and there, we have some details to give Council members.

First, however, we wish to reiterate the readiness of the Chadian Government to cooperate and to facilitate the international community's access to the eastern part of our country so that it may assist and protect refugees and displaced persons, as well as welcome them home. We sometimes forget that they are victims of the situation.

At one point, at the highest level we questioned the usefulness and effectiveness of the operation. There was some tendentious speculation to the effect that we regretted EUFOR's neutrality, while others say EUFOR was there to protect the N'Djamena Government because many of its staff were from a friendly country. That is not so. EUFOR-MINURCAT has a very specific and very clear mandate. The question is one of effectiveness and a clearly defined mandate. A clearly defined mandate will obviously be more effective in confronting what the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Angelo, called insecurity, which remains a source of concern. It is also a question of the tenuous fate of the displaced and migrant populations, the high cost of living caused by a significant international presence, reconstruction and the return of the displaced to their places of origin.

I recall the President of Chad's assertion that he would accept EUFOR's arrival precisely to enable the reconstruction and relocation of the displaced to their places of origin, but that did not happen. Perhaps it has only just begun. Humanitarian staff is being targeted and equipment stolen and damaged. Who is to blame? Not the Government of Chad, which is often put forward as a scapegoat.

The international community's task is a lengthy one that needs much time to develop a truly secure framework for a true neutralization and securitization of the zone under the protection of the international Mission. The goal is to neutralize and secure that zone to prevent any insurgents, be they Sudanese or Chadian, from exploiting the situation by entering the security zone and the refugee camps to recruit children and stocking up on supplies. The objective is to protect the people from abuse. That is truly the case, yet as soon as a Sudanese insurgent is seen exploiting the situation and moving through the region, the Government of Chad is accused of supporting the Sudanese insurgency.

That is not accurate. Chad had to help the Government of the Sudan to resolve its crisis and even to fight the rebellion, in particular the Justice and Equality Movement. In return, however, we experienced the situation of which all are aware. We therefore wonder what the idea of "protection" means. Does it rule out armed intervention to confront any military incursion in the protected zone? If so, we in Chad feel that that would be akin to asking a bodyguard not to react in the face of aggression towards the object he is protecting. We therefore insist on the need clearly to define the mandate of the international Mission, in particular its military dimension. We are facing soldiers who are armed to the hilt, whom the police or gendarmes would not be capable of stopping. The troops of the Chadian Government are concerned about the border situation. Their role must be clearly defined to avoid misunderstanding.

We must bear in mind that this is a very special mission — one that is essentially humanitarian in nature but not a classical peacekeeping operation. We must not disappoint the populations concerned: the displaced, the refugees and those who host them. We must serve them and not the N'Djamena Government. Since the operation was accepted as humanitarian from the outset, we should like to avoid any subtle deviation that would add confusion by giving it a political mandate advocating particular good offices. Mediation and political agreements exist in other frameworks. Let the parties observe those. We talk of armed opposition, but in our country there is a democratic opposition and a democratic political life. We are trying to build and consolidate our rule of law and democracy. We would have preferred to talk about "armed groups", "rebels" or some other term, but the term "armed opposition", which I think I read in the report, is not appropriate in our view.

The Government of Chad is implementing the Sirte agreement with the armed groups in the context

of the 13 August agreement that we signed with the political parties. Contrary to what is being said, however, that agreement is not simply a technical one to organize elections. It also has a political, economic and social content that takes all of Chad's problems into account and recommends solutions. There is a tendency to present it as a mere technical electoral agreement, which it is not.

I also wish to say that Chad and the President of the Republic are ready to accept the replacement of EUFOR by a military force of the United Nations. But we are requesting further consultations precisely because of those questions, so that we can together define the concept of MINURCAT and the success of a military operation, without having the feeling that our hand is being forced, as well as specify the mandate.

We welcome the fact that, thank God, the Council has interested itself in the issue and that it is already expressing its intention to authorize, at the appropriate time — as I read in the Secretary-General's proposal — the deployment of a MINURCAT military component. We hope that things remain at the level of intentions as we wait for the Secretary-General and Chad to come to a preliminary understanding on the operational and practical aspects of the issue. I would certainly not like to give the Council the impression that the operation is useless; it is supported by the Government of Chad and is useful for the populations concerned. The EUFOR-MINURCAT operation must be maintained. It is a question of improving it and ensuring that its follow-on is carried out by the United Nations under the best possible conditions. That is our objective.

It is true that the international community's presence in the eastern part of our country has a deterrent aspect — which we perhaps do not often see — and thus, even if it is not a peacekeeping operation, that it could contribute to the establishment of conditions for a return to peace in the region.

Before concluding, I must refer to our relations with our neighbour the Sudan. Yes, we signed agreements in Dakar, and since then we have had several meetings in the context of the follow-up committee. During the most recent committee meeting, the Sudanese Government and ourselves, we pledged, in the presence of the international community, to re-establish diplomatic relations between our two countries, it being understood that the Sudan was the country that had broken them and that Chad could not fail to agree to their re-establishment.

As in the past, Chad has the political will to help the Sudan resolve its crisis in Darfur by peaceful means. Thus, we are willing to assist our Sudanese brothers. We hope that this squabble — which is destabilizing the eastern part of our country and threatens security in the subregion — will end. We believe that, once the Darfur issue is resolved, we will no longer be speaking of insecurity in eastern Chad.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.